



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Maxine Brown-Roberts, AICP, Project Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: October 20, 2015

SUBJECT: BZA Case No.18095B - The Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara, Inc.
 1326 Quincy Street, NE

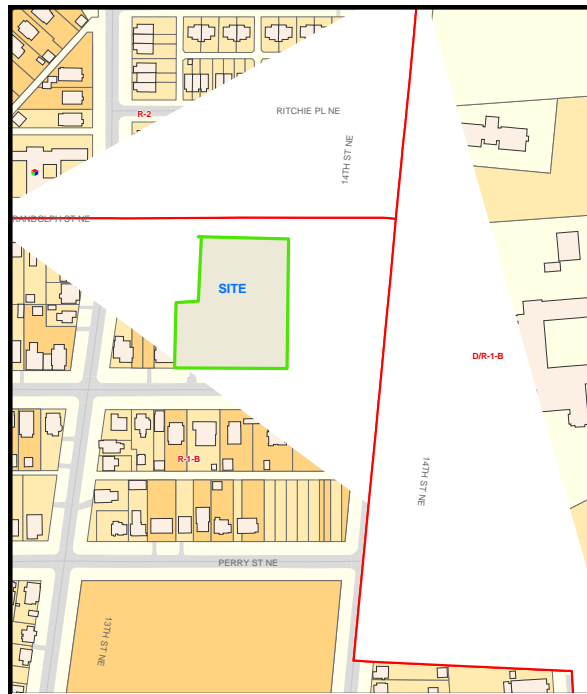
I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Servants of the Lord and the Servants of Matara requested special exception review pursuant to § 3104 and § 215, Clerical and Religious Group Residence, to allow continued use as a religious group residence to house up to 96 persons at 1326 Quincy Street, NE (approved in BZA case 18096, 2010 for a five year term). The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the request for a special exception for the religious group residence with the condition that:

1. No more than 96 persons are housed on the site at any one time.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	1326 Quincy Street, NE
Legal Description:	Square 3968, Lot 17
Ward/ANC:	5/ANC-5B
Zoning:	R-1-B
Lot Characteristics:	The subject property is located mid-block fronting on Quincy Street to the south; 14 th Street to the east; Randolph Street to the north; and 13 th Street to the west. The lot is irregularly shaped with an area of 68,000 square feet. The lot is improved with a 4-story, 10,000 square feet house and is surrounded by mature trees.
Adjacent Properties:	The property to the east is the Franciscan Monastery Hall; to the west is the Monastery of the Holy Cross, Inc. and a single-family detached house; to the south are single-family detached houses and other religious institutions such as the Franciscan Mission Service of North America, Franciscan Monastery Hall, and the Mission Holy Apostle all in the R-1-B district. To the north are single-family triplexes in the R-2 district.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The area surrounding the property is developed with single-family detached and triplex houses. Some of the large houses have been converted to accommodate religious institutions some of which have residences.
Historic Preservation:	The property is not within a historic district nor is the building landmarked.



SITE LOCATION



FRONT OF BUILDING

III. BACKGROUND AND APPLICATION

On September 17, 2010, the BZA approved a special exception request by The Servants of the Lord and the Servants of Matara for a religious group residence to house up to 96 persons. The special exception had a term limit of 5 years which expired on September 17, 2015.

In the July 18, 2015 application, the Applicant requested to continue the use of the building for a religious group residence to house up between 25 and 50 persons with no time limit. In the submission, the Applicant stated that the number of long term residents range between 25 and 50 persons. However, the facility has the capacity to accommodate 96 persons and on rear occasions,

there is a need to accommodate out of town visitors for a few days and the number of persons can increase to the full capacity of up to 96 persons. OP advised the Applicant that with a BZA approval and a Certificate of Occupancy for 25 to 50 persons they would be in violation if they accommodated over 50 persons. The application was subsequently amended to request a special exception for up to 96 persons with no time restriction, consistent with the previous BZA approval.

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The subject property is in the R-1-B district, designated to “. . . protect quiet residential areas now developed with one-family detached dwellings and adjoining vacant areas likely to be developed for those purposes. . .” The district also provides for “. . . only a few additional and compatible uses . . .” one of which is a clerical and religious group residence. The proposal is consistent with this recommendation.

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

The requested special exception meets the requirements of § 215 and §3104.1 as demonstrated below:

a. 215 CLERICAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUP RESIDENCES (R-1)

215.1 Use as residences for clerical groups and religious denominations in excess of fifteen (15) persons shall be permitted as a special exception in an R-1 District if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.

The subject property is zoned R-1-B. Special exception review is required as the applicant proposes to house up to 96 persons.

215.2 Use as residences for clerical groups and religious denominations shall not adversely affect the use of neighboring property.

Properties to the east, south and southwest of the subject site accommodate religious uses similar to the proposed housing on the subject property. The single-family residences to the northwest and north of the site are buffered by extensive vegetation which would minimize view and sound from the property. The Applicant submitted letters of support from adjacent residents and religious institutions stating that they have “no complaint” regarding the presence and operation of the facility within the neighborhood. In fact, some neighbors have stated that that the proposed use is a “welcome addition” to the neighborhood.

215.3 The amount and arrangement of parking spaces shall be adequate.

The residents of the property would not have personal cars. Their transportation needs would be addressed by 5 vehicles; 1, 12-passanger van; 2, 7-passanger mini-vans; and 2 cars which the Order would use to transport the residents to and from the property. All the vehicles in addition to visitor and guest vehicles are able to be accommodated on-site. Additionally, WMATA buses travel along Quincy Street with a bus stop a few steps from the subject property.

b. 3104.1 Special Exception Relief pursuant to

i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The proposed facility to accommodate up to 96 residents is in harmony with the intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map as it is a residential use and meets the requirements of § 215 as demonstrated in the analysis above.

ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

A religious group residence to accommodate up to 96 persons is similar to other uses in its vicinity. The proposed use would not generate any excessive noise and is buffered from adjacent uses by intense vegetation. The property has adequate on-site parking to accommodate the vehicles which would be used to transport the residents to and from the property. The traffic to and from the site should not have an adverse impact on vehicular circulation in the area.

The 5 year time limit imposed in 2011 has enabled the Applicant to demonstrate that the proposed use could operate without negatively affecting the neighborhood. This is borne out through the letters of support provided by the property owners directly adjacent to the subject property and the wider neighborhood. OP is of the view that the Applicant has demonstrated that it can operate without negatively affecting the adjacent neighbors or the wider neighborhood. OP would therefore recommend the removal of the time limit.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT is expected to provide a report under separate cover. OP is not aware of comments from any other District agency.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The property is within ANC-5B. At its September 30, 2015 meeting, ANC-5B reviewed and voted to recommend approval of the proposal. The neighbors, members of the community and the ANC-5B-02 representative have provided letters of support for the proposal and indicated that the facility has been a good neighbor.